

PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTION OF A NEW BURROWING
MUD-SHRIMP FROM EASTERN AUSTRALIA
(CRUSTACEA, MACRURA REPTANTIA, LAOMEDIIDAE)

by

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(Figure 1.)

In 1966, we described a new thalassinid shrimp of the family Laomeidiidae from New Zealand waters as *Jaxea novaezealandiae* (Wear & Yaldwyn, *Zool. Pubs. Vict. Univ. Wellington*, 41). At that time we referred in passing to a large, undescribed burrowing laomeidiid of the genus *Laomedea* from eastern Australian shallow waters (1966: 2, 3). More material of this new form has now become available from mangrove swamps, and from the shallow subtidal channels draining such swamps, and a full illustrated description of this new form is in preparation. Due to unavoidable delays in the completion of this study, it now appears that a colour plate of this eastern Australian *Laomedea* will be published later this year (Healy & Yaldwyn, 1970, *Australian Crustaceans in Colour*, A. H. & A. W. Reed, Sydney, frontispiece) before a formal description is ready. We give here a preliminary description of this species so that its new name can become systematically available.

Family LAOMEDIIDAE

Genus *Laomedea* de Haan in Siebold, 1841.

Not of other authors (cf Neave, *Nomenclator Zoologicus*).

Laomedea healyi n.sp.

A degenerate-eyed, relatively-large, burrowing shrimp with stout, heavily-built and slightly unequal chelipeds. Anterolateral margin of carapace with an orbital spine above *linea thalassinica* and an antennal spine immediately below *linea*. Antennal peduncle short, penultimate segment subequal to ultimate; antennal flagellum with several, prominent, relatively-long, hair-like "branches" irregularly spaced along its length. Chelipeds with fingers heavy and toothed on inner margins. Branchial formula as for *Jaxea novaezealandiae* (i.e. 18 gills present), no podobranch on 1st maxilliped.

Laomedea healyi differs from the only other species in the genus, *L. astacina* de Haan, 1841, from Japan (see Sakai, 1962, *Pubs. Seto mar. biol. Lab.*, X(1):27-34, pls. V-VI), in numerous small details including the possession of an antennal spine on the anterolateral margin of the carapace and the presence of the highly characteristic "branches" along the antennal flagella.

Holotype: A female, carapace length (base of orbit to posterior midline of carapace) 16 mm, from burrow in intertidal mangrove mud, Careel Bay, Pittwater, New South Wales, December 1967, Anthony Healy & J. C. Yaldwyn (Australian Museum No. P.15820). The frontispiece of the above mentioned book *Australian Crustaceans in Colour* is a colour photograph of the holotype alive, while the exact type-locality is at the foot of the mangrove tree illustrated

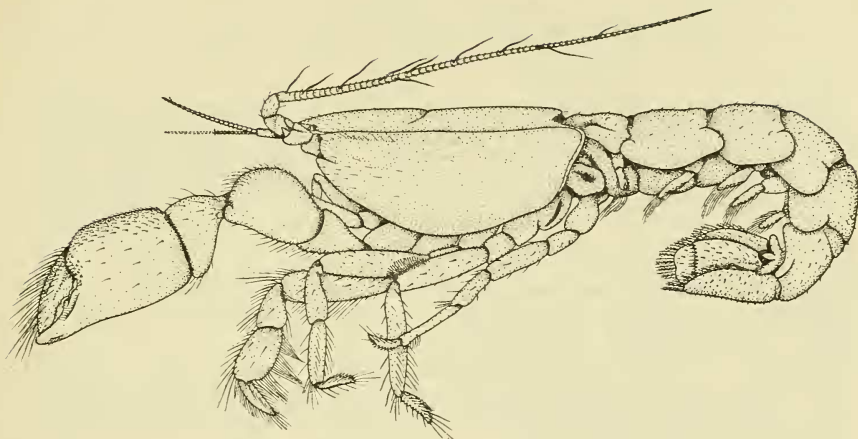


Figure 1.—*Laomedea healyi* Yaldwyn & Wear, Holotype. New South Wales.

at the left of plate 9 in Gillett & Yaldwyn, 1969, *Australian Seashores in Colour*, A. H. & A. W. Reed, Sydney.

Paratype specimens from New South Wales and Queensland are in the Australian Museum collections and will be listed with the full description of this species now being prepared for the *Australian Zoologist*.
